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➤EDITORIAL NOTES.◀

❏**Dr. Stebbins', Interpretation of the Balaam Narrative.**—Our readers will be interested in the attempt of Dr. Stebbins to interpret the narrative of Balaam from a naturalistic standpoint. He has undoubtedly succeeded in presenting, most vividly, the times and surroundings of the story. After a study of this article one will be better prepared to form an opinion concerning the narrative; for the first and most important step in all interpretation is to acquaint one's self with the historical setting of the passage to be studied. The question arises, however, whether Dr. Stebbins has not gone too far. His estimate of Balaam's character may be correct, his portrayal of the relations existing between Israel and Moab may be historically accurate; but is there not one element which he has entirely failed to consider in his treatment of the subject? Does he not seem to have left entirely out of the account the fact, for it is a fact, and, indeed, an indisputable one, that in everything pertaining to Israel's career, there was manifested a special divine interposition? It is well, we believe, to emphasize the human element in Scripture; this element has been, and is, lost sight of by too many interpreters. And in just so far as it is lost sight of, there is a failure to grasp the true force and meaning of the Sacred narrative. But while giving due consideration to this element, we must not forget the other, the divine element. Not to appreciate this is attended with many serious consequences.

Dr. Stebbins is known, the world over, for his able defense of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch. His ability as a critic and as an interpreter is conceded by all. His views, therefore, upon the subject under consideration, while as a whole they are not likely to be accepted by many who hold to a strict theory of inspiration, are nevertheless entitled to a respectful and thoughtful consideration.

Rev. Dr. Cheyne and the "Hittites."—We print with pleasure the following letter, received just too late for the April number. The warning which it contains is one to which we may well give heed. In his recent book, *Assyriology: Its Use and Abuse in Old Testament Study*, Prof. Francis Brown considers, none too strongly, the same danger. He says: "First results are provisional. Early translations are approximate only. Some detail, at first unperceived or misunderstood, may change the scope of a whole inscription. And, more than this, to see the newly discovered facts in their right relations—to perceive their meaning when combined with other facts, and to work them all together into one compact, enduring structure, is not a matter for the first day, or first week." What is true of Assyriology, is pre-eminently true of "Hittology."

TENDRING RECTORY, COLCHESTER, March 21, 1885.
To the Editor of THE OLD TESTAMENT STUDENT.

Pray allow me to correct an inadvertence of your contributor "J. A. S." on p. 159 of the OLD TESTAMENT STUDENT, Dec., 1884. He apparently supposes that I regard the Old Testament references to the Hittites as all unhistorical, whereas it is only *certain references* which I have, in the article "Hittites" in the